

EXHIBIT

“28”

November 14, 2019

The Honorable Nathaniel M Gorton, United States District Judge:

My friendship with Michelle began over ten years ago, and I consider her to be one of my dearest friends. We initially met through our volunteer work at a local museum and the food bank. Shortly thereafter our children started attending the same lower and middle schools, and we became ever closer through our volunteer and committee work at our children's schools.

Michelle has been dedicated to supporting various causes that help those in need and has volunteered countless hours supporting many charities in our community, not just through a monetary donation but with her time and passion for the cause. Whether she's giving her time physically volunteering at the food bank or executing a fundraising event, she approaches her commitment with purpose and desire to the best job possible. For example, Michelle created a special children's volunteer section at the Foodbank called "Izzy's Corner" out of her desire to be able to volunteer with her younger children at the Foodbank. There was growing interest for parents to be able to participate in giving back to the community with their children; however, up until Izzy's corner, children under 14 years old could not volunteer. Izzy's Corner provided a safe, separate section for younger children to volunteer sorting donated food and supplies and help in the distribution process. One of the creative ways for raising money was through a children's writing contest and the winning story would be turned into a children's book with the design and printing costs funded by Michelle and the proceeds from the book sales going to the food bank. Many young children from various lower and middle schools in the community submitted their stories to be chosen and throughout this process became that much more aware of fighting hunger in our community and directly engaging with the local food bank. None of this would have been possible without Michelle's creativity, passion and commitment to helping others.

Throughout the years of spending extensive time with Michelle and her family, I've come to admire Michelle's big-hearted, loving and generous nature towards her family and friends. At the early stages of our friendship, while attending a fundraising event, my husband [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Looking back, Michelle's strength and support that night was the beginning of our long friendship and a testament of who she is as a person - a

compassionate friend who always seems to go “above and beyond” to try and help others in times of need. She has continued to show her genuine interest in my family’s well-being and has always been there for me as a friend.

Nearly four years ago, Michelle’s mother [REDACTED] which forever altered her life. This incident has been heart breaking for Michelle and her family. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], it was Michelle who was waiting by her mom’s side, being the strength and support for her father and rest of her family. [REDACTED]

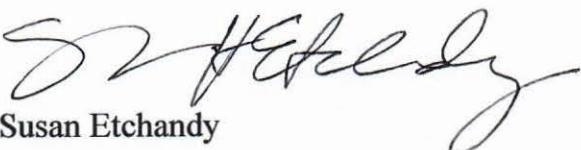
[REDACTED] Michelle continues to remain devoted to doing all that she can to help with her mother’s care and recovery. Michelle is the epitome of a caring and loving daughter and anyone that’s a close friend to Michelle’s knows the strong bond she shares with her mother. Once again, in a time of difficulty, Michelle puts her own life aside in order to be there for someone else.

In March of this year, when the college admissions scandal broke on the news and Michelle was arrested and indicted for a federal crime, it was beyond shocking to find my good friend being charged for such a crime. It’s difficult to reconcile Michelle’s involvement in the college admissions scandal and the person I’ve come to know over the years, someone who exemplifies strength, loyalty and support during the most difficult of times for so many people.

The prosecutors have alleged that it was the parents’ own egos that drove them to participate in the college admissions scandal. While that may be true for some of the parents implicated in this scandal, having known Michelle and personally witnessing her parenting style, I can attest that Michelle is not someone who’s driven by status. She is the most loving and supportive mom to her children with her primary concern being the overall well-being and happiness of her family. Michelle made a terrible mistake driven by her love for her children. As a result of her misguided judgment, I’ve also seen my friend’s life turned upside down since March. Her life has been consumed with not only resolving her current legal predicament and her own well-being, but even more so with concerns about the state of mind and well-being of her children as all of this has unfolded in our local community and beyond. Michelle has a long road ahead of her to make amends with those people she’s hurt and is taking the first step in reaching out to individuals to personally apologize for her actions. I have “heard” in her voice almost in a daily conversation of the terrible regret and remorse she feels, and not just because of the consequences she faces, but also because of the devastating impact this has had upon others beyond her children and her family.

Judge Gorton, I'm struggling with coming to terms the cost to our community of losing Michelle to prison as a first-time, non-violent offender. I don't believe that sending people to prison is a cure all solution for a non-violent offender. In my opinion, it is an unproductive use of taxpayers money and an ineffective method of punishment given Michelle's already demonstrated ability to do so much more by giving her time and energy to causes that need help in our community. There are certainly other forms of punishment beyond prison time that will be effective in holding Michelle fully accountable while at the same allowing her to continue to serve the community in ways that benefit so many people who are truly in need. I am certain Michelle will work extraordinarily hard to make a difference in our society as her path to moving passed her mistakes and moving forward in life. I respectfully ask that in assessing an appropriate punishment for Michelle, you please consider Michelle's remarkable contributions in life prior to this indictment and the benefits she offers to so many others as a loving mother, wife, daughter, sister, friend and invaluable member of our charitable community.

Sincerely,



Susan Etchandy